

DEVICE FOR MAINTAINING POSITION OF A PIECE OF JEWELRY

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates generally to jewelry, and more particularly to a positional aid for maintaining a piece of jewelry on an appendage.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Certain types of jewelry are regularly worn on a person's fingers or toes. For example, one or more rings or "toe" rings may be worn on a person's fingers or toes. The wearing of rings presents several risks, such as damage to the ring or a precious stone or gem embedded in the ring or loss of the ring. Certain environments may increase the risk to the ring. For example, if the person wearing the ring is going to be performing manual labor, the metal of the ring may become scratched due to the manual labor. Furthermore, if the ring were to fall off of the person's finger or toe, it may become lost.

[0003] Additionally, other environments in which the person may become wet may increase the risk of the ring slipping off the person's finger or toe. For example, if the person is boating, swimming, or scuba diving, the person's hands or feet will or are likely to become wet. Cold water may also cause a person's finger or toe to shrink, and thus, increase the risk of the ring slipping off. This is further compounded by the fact that if the ring were to slip off and fall in the water, then it may become irretrievable.

[0004] Furthermore, other factors may also increase the risk that a ring may slip off and be lost. For example, a poor-fitting ring is more likely to slip off. The use of lotions, for example, sun-block or moisturizing lotions, may further increase the risk.

[0005] Other devices have been proposed whose primary purpose is to protect a ring.

One such device is disclosed in U.S. Patent 1,885,930 issued November 1, 1932 to James Lowy. The Lowy device is specifically designed for protecting a ring and is comprised of a piece of flexible, deformable material forming a unitary sleeve which is placed over the ring to protect the ring and any precious or semi precious stones therein.

The Lowy device is made from a "blank" of material, such as rubber. The blank is fitted over a specific ring and cured so that it conforms to the shape and size of the ring over which it is to be fitted. Once cured or formed, Lowy device cannot be adjusted.

[0006] Another ring protector device is disclosed in U.S. Patent 6,094,747 issued August 1, 2000 to Jay Malick. The Malick device includes a ring retaining member in the shape of a ring or circular band which is worn adjacent but outward from the ring. The retaining member is connected to a wristband for restraining the restraining member. However, the Malick device is cumbersome and difficult to take on and off.

[0007] The present invention is aimed at one or more of the problems set forth above.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION AND ADVANTAGES

[0008] In one aspect of the present invention, a device for maintaining position of a piece of jewelry is provided. The device includes a strip of flexible material having a first end and a second end. A fastener couples the first and second ends of the strip

[0009] In another aspect of the present invention, a device for maintaining position of a piece of jewelry includes a strip of flexible material having a first end, a second end and a middle portion between the first and second ends, is provided. The device further includes a fastener having first and second components. The first component is coupled to the first end of the strip of flexible material and the second component is coupled to the second end of the strip of flexible material.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Other advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

[0011] Figure 1A is a top down picture of a device for maintaining a piece of jewelry in position, according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] Figure 1B is a top down picture of a device for maintaining a piece of jewelry in position, according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] Figure 2 is a top down line drawing of the device of Figure 1;

[0014] Figure 3 is a first side view of the device of Figure 1; and,

[0015] Figure 4 is a second side view of the device of Figure 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] Referring to the Figures, wherein like numerals indicate like or corresponding parts throughout the several views, a device **10** for maintaining the position of a piece of jewelry, according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown. The device includes a strip of flexible material (or flexible strip) **12** having a first end **14**, a second end **16** and a middle portion **18** located between the first and second ends **14**, **16**. In one aspect of the present invention, the flexible strip **12** is made from a material that floats.

[0017] In one embodiment of the present invention the flexible strip **12** is composed from a synthetic rubber material, such as neoprene. The flexible strip **12** may further include a layer of stretch material located on one or both sides of the flexible strip **12**.

[0018] The device **10** further includes a fastener **20** having first and second components

22, 24. As shown, the first component **22** is coupled to the first end **14** of the strip of flexible material **12** and the second component **24** is coupled to the second end **16** of the strip of flexible material **12**.

[0019] In one embodiment, of the present invention the fastener **20** is infinitely adjustable. For example, the fastener **20** may be composed of Velcro. One of the first and second components **22, 24** includes a pad of hook material fixed onto one side of the respective end **14, 16** and the other of the first and second components **22, 24** includes a pad of loop material fixed onto an opposite side the other respective end **14, 18**. The first and second components **22, 24** may be fixed onto the flexible strip by threads (i.e., through sewing), glue or any other suitable means or method.

[0020] In another embodiment of the present invention, the first and second components **22, 24** may be a layer of hook material fixed over any portion (including the whole) of the one side of the flexible strip **12** and a layer of loop material fixed over any portion (including the whole) of the other side of the flexible strip **12**.

[0021] In one embodiment, the first and second components **22, 24** have the same shape and dimensions (see Figure 1A). In another embodiment, the first and second components **22, 24** have a different shape and/or dimension. For example, in Figure 1B, the first component **22** is longer than the second component **24**.

[0022] Other fasteners may also be used, for example, buttons or hook fasteners.

[0023] In another aspect of the present invention, the flexible strip **14** may also include a lateral slit **26** within the middle portion **14** of the device **10**.

[0024] In use, when the piece of jewelry, such as a ring, is in place on a person's finger or toe. The device **10** may be wrapped around the finger and the ring (not shown)

and secured in place by the fastener **20**. The ring may be fitted within the slit **26** which further helps maintain the ring in place.

[0025] In another aspect of the present invention, the device **10** may be of various shapes and sizes. For example, the flexible strip **12** may be offered in different sizes to accommodate the fingers of different people, such as children and adults. Additionally, the flexible strip **12** may be various shapes. In the illustrated embodiment, the flexible strip **12** has an oval shape, but may be of various other geometric shapes, such as a rectangle. Furthermore, the flexible strip **12** may be in additional shapes such as in the shape of a fish or octopus and may have a top covering (not shown) with an image of the fish or octopus or other image printed thereon.

[0026] Other aspects and features of the present invention can be obtained from a study of the drawings, the disclosure, and the appended claims.